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Magistrate Judge Michelle L. Peterson

DEC 29 2022

AT SEATTLE
CLERK U.S. DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
BY

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff

v.

BLANCA MEDINA,

Defendant.

CASE NO. MJ22-602

COMPLAINT

BEFORE the Honorable Michelle L. Peterson, United States Magistrate Judge,
Seattle, Washington.

The undersigned complainant being duly sworn states:

COUNT 1

(Failure to Surrender for Service of Sentence)

On or about September 22, 2022, in Seattle, within the Western District of Washington, the defendant, BLANCA MEDINA, having been released pursuant to Chapter 207 of Title 18 of the United States Code, while awaiting surrender for service of a sentence after conviction in the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, under cause number CR20-092 JCC, for a violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 841(b)(1)(B), and 846, a felony offense punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to 40 years, and having been directed by the Court on or

1 about August 31, 2022, to surrender at the Federal Correctional Institution Phoenix
2 Satellite Camp no later than September 22, 2022, did knowingly and willfully fail to
3 surrender for service of a sentence as ordered by the Court.

4 All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3146(a)(2) and
5 (b)(1)(A)(i).

6 I, Cree Molina, being first duly sworn on oath, depose and say:

7 **INTRODUCTION**

8 1. I make this affidavit in support of this Complaint to obtain an arrest warrant
9 for the person of BLANCA MEDINA for the crime of Failure to Surrender for Service
10 of a Sentence because she failed to appear to begin serving a sentence imposed by this
11 Court, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3146(a)(2).

12 2. The facts contained in this affidavit come from both from my personal
13 observations and knowledge, and from information obtained from other law enforcement
14 officers participating in this investigation. This affidavit is intended to set forth the facts
15 relevant to the determination of probable cause for the requested warrant and does not
16 set forth all my knowledge about this matter.

17 **AFFIANT BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE**

18 3. I am a Deputy with the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) and have been so
19 since February 2017. One of my primary responsibilities with the USMS is to
20 investigate violations of federal law. Prior to becoming a Deputy U.S. Marshal, I was a
21 Special Agent for Homeland Security Investigations from August 2014 to October 2016.
22 My law enforcement training includes graduating from the United States Marshals
23 Service Academy, the Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Training
24 Academy, and the Criminal Investigator Training Program taught at the Federal Law
25 Enforcement Training Center in Glynnco, Georgia.

26 **SUMMARY OF PROBABLE CAUSE**

27 4. On July 23, 2020, a grand jury returned a four-count indictment charging
28 members of a transnational drug trafficking organization with three drug trafficking

1 offenses and one money laundering offense in *United States v. Alan Gomez-Marentes, et*
2 *al.*, under cause number CR20-092 JCC in the United States District Court for the
3 Western District of Washington. Dkt. 1. Defendant, BLANCA MEDINA, was charged
4 in Count 1 with Conspiracy to Distribute Controlled Substances, in violation of Title 21,
5 United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 841(b)(1)(A), and 846. Dkt. 1. A warrant issued
6 for MEDINA's arrest the following day. Dkt. 20.

7 5. On July 28, 2020, MEDINA was arrested and made her initial appearance.
8 Dkt. 59. An arraignment and detention hearing were held on August 3, 2020. Dkt. 121.
9 MEDINA entered a plea of not guilty, and the Court ordered her released and placed her
10 on bond. Dkt. 121. One of the conditions of MEDINA's bond was to be placed on
11 location monitoring. Dkt. 122. The appearance bond also included a pretrial supervision
12 condition. Dkt. 122. At all times relevant herein, MEDINA was supervised by U.S.
13 Probation and Pretrial Services Officers in the Western District of Washington (USPO
14 Erin O'Donnell) and the Central District of California (USPO Jillian Huynh and USPO
15 Location Monitoring Specialist Brenda Mercado).

16 6. On August 6, 2020, the grand jury returned a 13-count Superseding
17 Indictment adding one defendant and charging the members of the drug trafficking
18 organization with seven drug trafficking offenses, one money laundering offense, and
19 five firearm offenses. Dkt. 152. The conspiracy charge in Count 1 against MEDINA
20 remained the same and a second count, Count 5, was added charging MEDINA with
21 Possession of Methamphetamine and Heroin with Intent to Distribute, in violation of
22 Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A). Dkt. 152. An order
23 continuing MEDINA's conditions of release was entered. Dkt. 171. MEDINA was
24 arraigned on the Superseding Indictment on August 14, 2020, and she entered pleas of
25 not guilty. Dkt. 224.

26 7. On March 31, 2021, the grand jury returned a Second Superseding
27 Indictment, adding one defendant. Dkt. 378. Both Count 1 and Count 5 against
28 MEDINA remained the same and an order continuing her conditions of release was

1 entered the following day. Dkt. 401. On April 15, 2021, MEDINA was arraigned on the
2 Second Superseding Indictment and entered pleas of not guilty. Dkt. 472.

3 8. On January 6, 2022, MEDINA pled guilty to a lesser-included offense of
4 that charged in Count 1, Conspiracy to Distribute Controlled Substances, in violation of
5 Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), 841(b)(1)(B), and 846. Dkts. 634 and
6 636. MEDINA remained on bond. Dkt. 634. Sentencing was scheduled for April 5,
7 2022. Dkt. 634. The sentencing hearing was later continued to May 24, 2022,
8 rescheduled to May 23, 2022, and ultimately continued again to August 23, 2022. Dkts.
9 706, 716, and 740.

10 9. On August 23, 2022, MEDINA appeared for sentencing as ordered by the
11 Court. Dkt. 863. After hearing the arguments of the parties, the Court sentenced
12 MEDINA to 42 months' imprisonment and four years of supervised release. Dkts. 863
13 and 864. The judgment of conviction directed MEDINA to report to begin her serving
14 her sentence "as notified by the Probation or Pretrial Services Office." Dkt. 864.

15 10. On August 31, 2022, United States Probation Officer Erin O'Donnell
16 mailed a letter to MEDINA, and her counsel, informing them that MEDINA had been
17 designated to serve her 42-month sentence at Federal Correctional Institution (FCI)
18 Phoenix Satellite Camp located at 37900 North 45th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona, 85086.
19 This letter also directed MEDINA to report to the institution by no later than 10:00 a.m.
20 on September 22, 2022. The letter was mailed to MEDINA at 12441 Old River School
21 Road, #216, Downey, California 90242. According to USPO O'Donnell, MEDINA and
22 her five children have been living at that complex since September 2021 – initially they
23 lived in unit #302, but on July 19, 2022, the moved into unit #216.

24 11. On September 7, 2022, MEDINA's counsel sent government counsel an
25 email asking to extend MEDINA's report date because MEDINA needed more time to
26 make arrangements for her five children. The following day, when government counsel
27 indicated that they would not oppose a short extension and asked how long of an
28 extension MEDINA was seeking, MEDINA's counsel explained that MEDINA was

1 looking to extend her report date by 30 days. On September 9, 2022, MEDINA's
2 counsel stated that he would prepare an Unopposed Motion and an Agreed Order for
3 government counsel to review, but no motion and order were ever received by
4 government counsel. Instead, MEDINA's counsel sent an email to United States
5 Probation Officer (USPO) Lisimba Jackson on September 12, 2022, which read:

6 Ms. Medina is requesting to extend her self surrender date 20 days. She is
7 to report to FCI Phoenix on 9/22. The government does not oppose. What is
8 USPO position. She needs additional time to set up custody for her 5
children before she is detained. Thanks.

9 It does not appear that MEDINA's counsel ever followed up with USPO Jackson.

10 12. On September 22, 2022, USPO Jamie Parkhurst filed a petition and request
11 for warrant alleging that MEDINA tampered with her GPS tracker on or about
12 September 21, 2022. Dkt. 892. In her memorandum supporting the petition and warrant,
13 USPO Parkhurst explained the following:

14 On September 21, 2022, at 11:36 p.m., U.S. Probation Officer Brenda
15 Mercado in the Central District of California sent an email advising of a
16 tracker strap tamper alert from Ms. Medina's GPS tracker. This alert is
17 typically indicative of a GPS tracker being cut off or forcibly removed.
18 Due to the late hour the email was sent, I did not see the notification of the
19 strap tamper until the morning of September 22, 2022. Officer Mercado
attempted to contact Ms. Medina, but she was unresponsive to these
contacts.

20 Officer Mercado reported she last spoke with the defendant around 9:00
21 p.m. on September 21, 2022, to confirm her plans to self-surrender. Ms.
22 Medina advised a friend was driving her to the facility and she provided
23 Officer Mercado with her friend's phone number. Officer Medina spoke
24 with Ms. Medina's friend, who noted he was not with her but was
25 scheduled to pick her up at midnight. In addition, Officer Mercado also
26 spoke with Ms. Medina's mother/3rd party custodian on September 21,
2022, who advised she had not seen Ms. Medina since the day before and
thought Ms. Medina was on her way to surrender to custody.

27 As of this writing, Ms. Medina has not surrendered to custody. Her current
28 whereabouts are unknown.

1 Dkt. 893. A warrant for MEDINA's arrest was issued that same day. Dkt. 894.

2 13. On September 22, 2022, MEDINA failed to report to FCI Phoenix to serve
3 her sentence as directed.

4 14. On September 23, 2022, USPO Jackson sent an email to MEDINA's
5 counsel asking if MEDINA's counsel ever sought an extension of her surrender date.
6 MEDINA's counsel responded, "No we did not and she confirmed her report date last
7 week with me. Ill reach out and see if I can get more information. Can you confirm she
8 od not sho[.]" USPO Jackson replied to MEDINA's counsel that MEDINA did not
9 surrender as directed and that the Bureau of Prisons was giving MEDINA until 1:00
10 p.m. (on September 23, 2022) before they would notify the U.S. Marshals. MEDINA
11 never surrendered.

12 15. On September 26, 2022, USPO Parkhurst confirmed with the staff at FCI
13 Phoenix that MEDINA never reported to the institution and filed a supplemental petition
14 alleging that MEDINA had failed to surrender to serve her 42-month sentence. Dkts. 895
15 and 896.

16 16. On or about December 9, 2022, MEDINA was arrested and made her initial
17 appearance in the Central District of California on the Western District of Washington
18 warrant. Dkts. 1, 3, and 5. Ultimately, the Court "considered the allegation that in
19 September 2022, Defendant removed her tracking device and failed to self-surrender to
20 begin serving the sentence imposed in the Western District of Washington," and found
21 "clear and convincing evidence that Defendant violated the conditions of her release"
22 and ordered MEDINA be detained.

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CONCLUSION

17. Based on the above facts, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to believe that on September 22, 2022, BLANCA MEDINA did knowingly and intentionally fail to appear to serve her sentence, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3146(a)(2).

DATED this 29th day of December, 2022.



Cree Molina, Complainant
Deputy United States Marshal

Based on the Complaint and Affidavit sworn to before me, and subscribed in my presence, the Court hereby finds that there is probable cause to believe the Defendant committed the offense set forth in the Complaint.



Michelle L. Peterson
United States Magistrate Judge